

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /086 W

----- 106775

R 111040Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0190

INFO AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, MY, SA

SUBJ: MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

REF : KUALA LUMPUR 0554

SUMMARY: IN THE WEEK SINCE PRIME MINISTER TUN ABDUL RAZAK DEPARTED SAUDI ARABIA WE HAVE DISCUSSED HIS VISIT WITH A NUMBER OF SAG OFFICIALS AND THE MALAYSIAN EMBASSY HERE. THE CONSENSUS IS THAT THE VISIT WAS SUCCESSFUL, BUT IN TERMS OF SAUDI FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS, NOT VERY SIGNIFICANT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER ABDUL RAZAK SEEMS HIMSELF TO HAVE PROVIDED THE BEST SUMMATION OF HIS VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA IN THE PRESS STATEMENT HE MADE IN RIYADH SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE (REFTEL). FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY ALSO BE OF SOME INTEREST.

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2. FOREIGN OFFICE DIRECTOR OF EASTERN AFFAIRS DESCRIBED THE VISIT AS SUCCESSFUL BUT BASICALLY ROUTINE. RELATIONS WITH MALAYSIA ARE GOOD AND THERE ARE NO OUTSTANDING POLITICAL PROBLEMS. THE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT WHICH WAS SIGNED DURING THE VISIT HE DESCRIBED AS SIMILAR TO THOSE SIGNED WITH A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES INCLUDING SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN. THIS POSITIVE BUT UNENTHUSIASTIC EVALUATION OF THE VISIT IS SHARED BY OFFICIALS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE.

3. MALAYSIAN EMBASSY COUNSELLOR AINATALLAH ALSO DESCRIBED THE VISIT AS SUCCESSFUL AND SAID THAT THE FIRM PROMISE OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE CAME AS A PLEASANT SURPRISE. BEFORE ABDUL RAZAK'S ARRIVAL SAUDI OFFICIALS HAD TOLD THE MALAYSIAN EMBASSY THAT IF THE GOM EXPECTED SUPPORT FOR ANY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IT SHOULD BE FULLY PREPARED TO SUPPORT THEIR ECONOMIC VIABILITY WITH FEASIBILITY STUDIES, ETC. MALAYSIAN EMBASSY HAD ARGUED THAT THE SAG SHOULD AGREE TO ASSISTANCE UP TO A CERTAIN AMOUNT AND THEN APPROVE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS ONLY FOR PROJECTS WHICH MET WITH SAG APPROVAL. IN THE EVENT, THE MALAYSIAN POSITION PREVAILED. DURING ABDUL RAZAK'S VISIT THE SAUDI SIDE WAS AT PAINS TO SAY THAT NORMALLY AID REQUESTS ARE CLOSELY SCRUTINIZED BEFORE THE SAG AGREES TO ANY FINANCING. BECAUSE MALAYSIA IS A SISTERLY ISLAMIC STATE, HOWEVER, THE SAG WAS MAKING AN EXCEPTION AND DEPARTING FROM NORMAL PROCEDURES.

4. AINATALLAH SAID THAT THE GOM WILL BE FOLLOWING UP ON THE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION AGREEMENT BY SENDING EXPERTS TO SAUDI ARABIA IN MARCH.

5. COMMENT: WHILE THE SAG IS WILLING TO BE GENEROUS IN GIVING AID, PARTICULARLY TO ISLAMIC COUNTRIES, IT IS UNCOMFORTABLE GIVING BILATERAL ASSISTANCE BECAUSE IT DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH PEOPLE QUALIFIED TO ANALYZE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. IN THE FUTURE THE SAG WILL RELY INCREASINGLY ON MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK, WHICH DO HAVE THIS CAPACITY. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE CENTRAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION HAS JUST REQUESTED ORGAN-

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IZATION CHARTS AND LEGISLATION ON U.S. AID, PARTICULARLY ON THE EARLY MARSHALL PLAN.
AKINS

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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